



Subject: *Shubenacadie Cenotaph*
To: Parks, Recreation and Culture Committee
Date Prepared: July 24, 2025
Related Motions: C24(346), C24(349), C24(425), C25(233), C25(234)
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Approved by: Kim Ramsay, CAO

Summary

At the July 23, 2025 Council meeting, Council passed motion C25(234), directing staff to prepare a report on the Shubenacadie cenotaph outlining options, costs and logistical considerations for potentially relocating the monument to its original location. Council received a presentation in July which requested an explanation of why the cenotaph was moved, an apology from Council for lack of consultation and for Council to move the cenotaph back to the parking lot location.

Financial Impact Statement

Financial impact depends on the option selected with the General Tax Rate Contingency Reserve as a funding source.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations as a result of this report.

Recommended Motion

Move that the Parks, Recreation and Culture Committee recommend that Council...

Option 1: *Keep the cenotaph at its current location at the Shubenacadie Legion.*

Option 2: *Keep the cenotaph at its current location at the Shubenacadie Legion and install an interpretive panel near the original train station site to acknowledge and communicate its historical significance to the Shubenacadie community with cost estimates and final designs to be brought back to Council.*

Option 3: *Keep the cenotaph in the current location with a commitment to provide support to the Legion if that property ever becomes surplus. Future funding of \$50,000 to be established in a Reserve from the General Tax Rate Contingency Reserve.*

Option 4: *Relocate the cenotaph to its original location with an estimated cost of \$42,000 to be funded from General Tax Rate Contingency Reserve.*

Option 5: *Relocate the cenotaph to a prominent site to be determined within the parking lot location with an estimated cost of \$40,000 to be funded from General Tax Rate Contingency Reserve.*

Background

As part of the 2023 Plan Update, parking issues were reviewed in the Shubenacadie Village Core. It was found that many small lots in the area could not meet current parking requirements, which limits redevelopment. To help address this, parking rules were changed for properties within 400 meters of a new public parking lot being built.

In October 2024, Council received a staff report proposing the development of a public parking lot in the Shubenacadie Village Core to support future growth. Since many village lots are too small to provide their own parking, a shared public lot would make development easier and help the village core be vibrant and commercially active. The accompanying concept plan kept the cenotaph in its original location (see below - Shubenacadie Parking - Proposed Concept Plan - October 2024).



Shubenacadie Parking - Proposed Concept Plan - October 2024

Council approved the proposed site concept plan through motion C24(346) and directed staff to engage an engineer for design work. However, the motion was tabled at the Regular Meeting of Council after it was expressed by the local area Councillor that the Shubenacadie Legion had asked if Council would consider relocating the cenotaph to the Shubenacadie Legion. Subsequently, motion C24(349) directed staff to provide a report on the cost of including the cenotaph move in the project.

In November 2024, a letter from the Legion was received asking that Council consider moving the cenotaph to the Legion grounds if they were moving it for the parking project. It is acknowledged that the “if” was not picked up by the Municipality and in the subsequent decisions made by Council.

In December, staff, in good faith, presented updated information, including a revised concept plan for the parking lot with the cenotaph relocated. Motion C24(346) was lifted and motion C24(425) was passed to approve the revised project and include it in the capital budget discussion. The project was later approved as part of the 2025/2026 capital budget with a new parking lot design developed with the cenotaph relocated (see below - Shubenacadie Parking - Concept Plan - December 2024).



Shubenacadie Parking - Concept Plan - December 2024

In May 2025, the cenotaph was relocated to the front of the Shubenacadie Legion. In July, community members requested to present to Council as the group wanted to return the monument to its original location. The presentation was received at the July 23, 2025, Regular Meeting of Council.

Following discussion, Council passed motion C25(233) to consider the presenters' input at a later date. Further discussion led to motion C25(234), tabling the previous motion until staff can prepare a report on the costs and logistics of possibly moving the cenotaph back to its original location.

Discussion

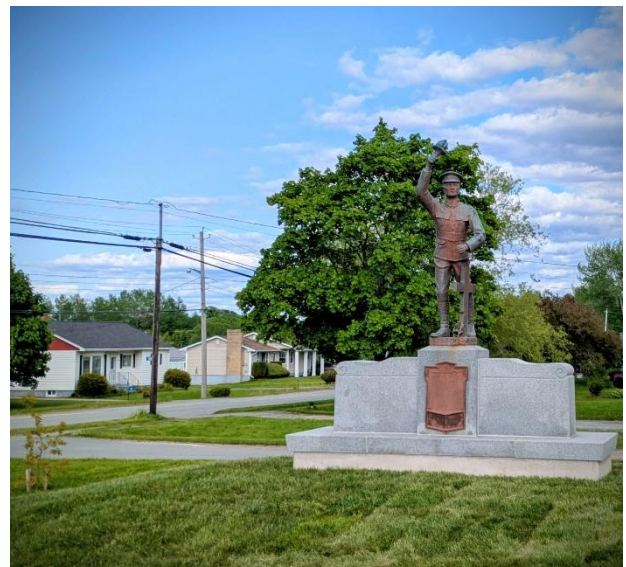
LOCATION

It is important to review the pros and cons of leaving the cenotaph at the Legion location versus moving it back to the former train station location on Hwy 2.

Legion

Based on feedback from the Legion President and information shared by Councillors and public social media comments, the following are pros to keeping the Cenotaph at the Legion:

- Legion staff can regularly monitor and clean the monument area and it is assumed less damage or vandalism in a manned location
- The cenotaph is more visible than behind the trees off the number 2 highway
- The placement by the elementary school enables the future generation to see it daily
- The revised design creates 25 parking spots vs. 12 parking spots which is better for the long-term growth of Shubenacadie village core
- There is public support for keeping the cenotaph at the Legion



Parking Lot

Based on feedback from the Legion President, the presentation to Council in July and public social media comments, the following are pros to moving the cenotaph back to the Hwy 2 location:

- The former train station location has historical significance as each of the names of the cenotaph has family members and a story and each of those soldiers walked the grounds prior to their departure
- Some members of the community are upset with the lack of full public consultation around moving the monument
- If the Legion closes, new owners may not want a cenotaph on their property
- There is public support for moving the cenotaph back to the parking lot



There are mixed opinions on the safety of Remembrance Day ceremonies at either location. There is also significant additional cost to the tax payer to move the cenotaph back to the Hwy 2 location.

OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

Option 1

Acknowledge to the community that Council understands the concern and frustration of some members of the community around moving the cenotaph and the lack of public consultation and keep the cenotaph at its current location at the Shubenacadie Legion.

Option 2

Keep the cenotaph at its current location at the Shubenacadie Legion and install an interpretive panel near the original train station site to acknowledge and communicate its historical significance to the Shubenacadie community with cost estimates and final designs to be brought back to Council.

Significance of the Shubenacadie Train Station

Following WWI, the community erected a war memorial near the train station on land granted by the Canadian National Railway (CNR). It commemorated 19 local soldiers and stood as a focal point for remembrance with additional soldier's names added following WWII.

As presented by community members, the monument was and continues to be significant as it acknowledges the sacrifice of those serving in both world wars, provides a place to commemorate loved ones lost and serves as a reminder of those that continue to serve in the armed forces.

The site of the former train station also carries meaning for residential school survivors and Indigenous peoples. For some, the train station marked the painful moment of separation from family, culture and identity. As conversations about truth and reconciliation continue across Canada, the land around the former train station is an important site of reflection and healing.

The train station land in Shubenacadie holds different meaning for many people. For some, it is a place to honour those who served in war. For others, it is a place of painful memories and loss. It's important to recognize both stories to truly understand the history of this community.

One option Council may want to consider is creating an interpretive panel that shares both of these histories, so the full story can be remembered and respected with the intent to engage the Indigenous community.

Option 3

There has been concern raised that the Legion may not be sustainable for years to come and that property may be sold. For some, this is a reason to return the monument to its original location. One option Council may wish to consider is acknowledging to the community that Council understands the concern and frustration of some members of the community around moving the cenotaph and the lack of public consultation while keeping the cenotaph in the current location and committing to provide support to the Legion if that property ever becomes surplus. This commitment could be shown to future Councils through the establishment of a Shubenacadie Legion Reserve, to be funded from the General Tax Rate Contingency Reserve.

Option 4

Relocate the cenotaph to its original location, with an estimated cost of \$42,000 to be funded from General Tax Rate contingency reserve. The cost to move the cenotaph back to the original location (and onto the original base) is estimated at \$23,000 and this includes minor repairs required to the original base.

If this option is preferred, there would be additional design costs estimated at \$10,000 required to alter the current engineered parking lot design to include the cenotaph in its original location.

There could also be repairs to the walkway and stairs to limit liability on municipal property estimated at \$5,000.

Removal of the concrete base at the Legion would be estimated at \$4,000, including using equipment to break up the pad, disposal and remediation of the landscape.

Option 5

Relocate the cenotaph to a prominent site to be determined within the parking lot location with an estimated cost of \$40,000 to be funded from General Tax Rate contingency reserve.

The relocation cost estimated at \$26,000 which would include a new concrete base at the new location, \$10,000 for the parking lot redesign and \$4,000 for the demolition of the Legion concrete base.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

This contributes to the East Hants 2021-2024 Strategic Plan through informed and sustainable decision making.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Financial impact depends on the option selected with the General Tax Rate Contingency Reserve as a funding source.

Alternatives

Council may wish to explore an alternate option not listed above.

Attachments

Shubenacadie Parking - Proposed Site Concept - October 2024

Shubenacadie Parking - Concept Plan - December 2024